

Appl. No. 10/631,335
Response dated: January 3, 2006
Reply to Office action of October 3, 2005

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated October 3, 2005, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration based on the following remarks. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-22 are pending in the present Application. Claims 1-22 have been provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-22 of copending Application No. 10/629,056. Claims 1-22 remain pending for consideration upon entry of the following remarks. No new matter has been added.

Double Patenting

The Examiner alleges that although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 1, 3 of the instant application and claim 14 of copending Application No. 10/629,056 are claiming same subject matters and are both very similar. Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Examiner states that both claims 1, 3 of the instant application and claim 14 of copending Application No. 10/629,056 are claiming a backlight assembly comprising:

a lamp assembly including a plurality of lamps, arranged in parallel, to generate a light, a power voltage being applied to the lamps through the lamp assembly;

a receiving container to receive the lamp assembly, the receiving container including a bottom face and side faces;

a plurality of sensors, disposed in the receiving container, to detect an operation state of the lamps and to output a plurality of sensing signals, one of the sensors facing a respective lamp;

a lamp driving module, disposed outside the receiving container, to provide the lamps with the power voltage,

voltage cut-off module comparing the sensing signals with a predetermined reference signal, the voltage cut-off module providing the lamp driving module with a voltage cut-off signal to prevent the lamp driving module

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from providing the lamps with the power voltage when at least one of the sensing signals has an amplitude smaller than the reference signal. (Emphasis added.)

In contrast, however, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14 of copending Application No. 10/629,056 claims a backlight assembly comprising:

a lamp assembly including a plurality of lamps arranged in parallel, each of the lamps having a first electrode formed at a first end and a second electrode formed at a second end, the lamp assembly providing the lamps with a power voltage to turn on or turn off the lamps;

a receiving container that receives the lamp assembly, the receiving container having a plurality of openings facing each of the lamps;

a lamp driving device including

i) a substrate facing the receiving container,

ii) a lamp driving module, mounted on the substrate, to provide the lamps with the power voltage,

iii) a plurality of sensors, disposed on the substrate to face the lamps, to detect an operation state of the lamps to output a plurality of sensing signals,

iv) a voltage cut-off module, disposed on the substrate, to compare the sensing signals with a predetermined reference signal, the voltage cut-off module providing the lamp driving module with a voltage cut-off signal to prevent the lamp driving module from providing the lamps with the power voltage when at least one of the sensing signals has an amplitude smaller than the reference signal.

(Emphasis added.)

More particularly, claims 1, 3 of the instant application neither require, nor suggest, the receiving container having a plurality of openings facing each of the lamps, as in claim 14 of copending Application No. 10/629,056. Further, claims 1, 3 of the instant application neither require, nor suggest, a plurality of sensors, disposed on the substrate (e.g., same substrate that

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the lamp driving module of claim 14 is mounted to in copending Application No. 10/629,056), as alleged by the Examiner.

In contrast, claims 1, 3 of the instant application merely recite a backlight assembly comprising a receiving container having a bottom face and side faces and including a plurality of sensors disposed in the receiving container. Further claims 1, 3 require a lamp driving module included in the inverter and disposed outside the receiving container, while the plurality of sensors are disposed in the receiving container. Thus, the lamp driving module and plurality of sensors disposed with the same substrate of claim 14 of copending Application No. 10/629,056 conflict with the plurality of sensors disposed in the receiving container and the lamp driving module disposed outside the receiving container of claims 1, 3 of the instant application. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3 of the instant application claim different subject matters and are therefore patentably distinct from claim 14 of copending Application No. 10/629,056.

Similar analysis is applicable to claims 2 and 4-22 of the instant application in comparison with claims 1-13 and 15-22 of copending Application No. 10/6329,056.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-22 of the instant application are patentably distinct over claims 1-22 of copending Application No. 10/629,056, as both sets of claims are different and claim different subject matter. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the provisional double patenting rejection of claims 1-22 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is cordially requested to telephone the undersigned.

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In the event the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks deems additional fees to be due in connection with this application, Applicants' attorney hereby authorizes that such fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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